

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1695

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, MX, WB, FR, UR, GW, UK

SUBJECT: WESTERN DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIETS ON BERLIN

REF: STATE 72123

1. WE THINK THE CHANCES ARE REASONABLY GOOD THAT WE CAN GET THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ASSOCIATE ITSELF WITH THE THREE POWERS IN ANY NEGATIVE BERLIN DECISION. IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF FEDERAL ACTIVITIES IN BERLIN (I.E., BUNDESTAG PRESIDUM MEETINGS), FOR EXAMPLE, SENIOR FRG OFFICIALS, INCLUDING MINISTER BAHR AND STATE SECRETARY FRANK, HAVE STATED THEIR READINESS TO HAVE THE FOUR BONN GROUP ALLIES TAKE A UNIFIED POSITION THAT WOULD BE PRESENTED AS A COMMON STAND OF THE FOUR.

2. IT MAY BE DIFFICULT, OF COURSE, TO AVOID HAVING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TRY PUBLICLY TO PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN IT AND THE THREE POWERS WHEN AND IF ANY NEGATIVE BERLIN DECISION IS MADE. THIS IS IN THE NATURE OF THINGS IN BONN, WHERE THE GOVERNMENT IS SENSITIVE TO OPPOSITION CHARGES OF SELLING OUT BERLIN. THE PROBLEM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POSSIBLY TRYING TO LEAVE THE MAJORITY OF THE BURDEN FOR ANY NEGATIVE DECISION WITH THE ALLIES WILL BE COMPLICATED BY UPCOMING LOCAL ELECTIONS IN THE FRG AS WELL AS BY THE BERLIN ELECTIONS EARLY NEXT YEAR. WE MAY FIND PARTS OF THE SPD LEADER-
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SHIP IN BONN ATTEMPTING, THEREFORE, TO SHIFT AS MUCH AS

POSSIBLE OF THE HEAT TO THE ALLIES FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS.

3. THESE CAVEATS NOTWITHSTANDING, HOWEVER, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT WE CAN LOCK THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INTO SUPPORTING THE ALLIES IN ANY NEGATIVE BERLIN DECISION. THE VERY FACT THAT ANY SUCH DECISION WOULD BE THE RESULT OF CLOSE BONN GROUP CONSULTATION SHOULD ENABLE US TO PRESS HOME THE POINT THAT THE DECISION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL FOUR PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONSULTATION. AS NOTED ABOVE, THIS POINT IS PROBABLY ALREADY ACCEPTED IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
HILLENBRAND

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